



National Sporting Library & Museum

NEWSLETTER

A RESEARCH CENTER FOR HORSE AND FIELD SPORTS

MIDDLEBURG, VIRGINIA

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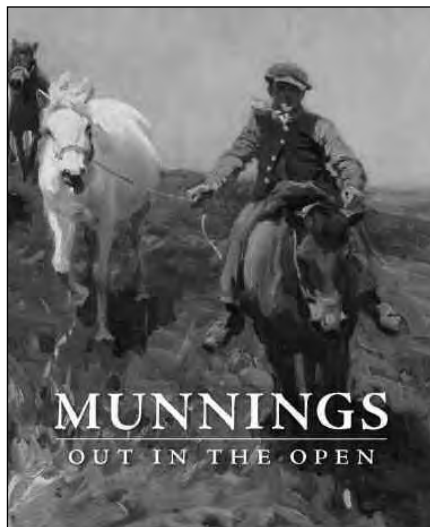
Major Fund-Raiser Stars 20th Century British Painter Sir Alfred J. Munnings

The focus was on British artist Sir Alfred J. Munnings, famed 20th century painter of horses and English country life, at the National Sporting Library & Museum, April 21, 2013, with *Munnings: Out in the Open*, an NSLM-curated exhibition of 68 paintings; a second exhibition of letters and drawings in the NSLM collections called *Sir Alfred Munnings in Print*; and a private screening of the film "Summer in February." This event, attended by over 430 people, was the first American screening of the British-produced film revolving around bohemian artists known as the Lamorna Group and dominated by the charismatic Munnings.

Exhibitions

Guests arrived to preview the extraordinary *Munnings: Out in the Open* paintings, six of which have never been shown in the United States. The NSLM exhibition is the largest U.S. presentation of Munnings' work in the in the past thirty years. Paintings were loaned by important private collectors and institutions such as the Yale Center for British Arts, New Haven, Connecticut; Castle House Trust, Sir Alfred Munnings Art Museum, Dedham, England; National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame, Saratoga Springs, New York; Pebble Hill Plantation, Thomasville, Georgia; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania; Canadian War Museum, Ottawa; and Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond.

Guests also previewed *Sir Alfred J. Munnings in Print* in the Forrest E. Mars, Sr. Exhibit Hall which shows unpublished Munnings drawings and letters from the NSLM collections. Selected letters provide



Cover of the NSLM *Munnings: Out in the Open* exhibition catalog. Catalog images© Castle House Trust (Sir Alfred Munnings Art Museum)

insight into Munnings' personality, opinions and social verve.

Catalog

In the beautiful catalog accompanying the exhibition, NSLM Chairman of the Board Manuel H. Johnson wrote, "Alfred Munnings, as one of the most recognized sporting artists of the twentieth century, a published author, and vocal proponent of the preservation of the countryside, speaks to the core interests of this institution and its mission." The color catalog contains reproductions of all of the paintings on view and essays by *Summer in February* author and film screenwriter Jonathan Smith; film producer Jeremy Cowdrey; international Munnings authority and NSLM board member Lorian Peralta-Ramos; and James Johnston, owner of Mendham Mill and Chairman of Castle House Trust. The catalog was edited by exhibition curator Claudia Pfeiffer.

Dinner and a Movie

During refreshments on the patio, the international crowd had an opportunity to chat with "Summer in February" producers Jeremy Cowdrey, Pippa Cross and Janette Day. CrossDay Productions has guided films that have gained numerous nominations for major awards, including two Academy Awards. "Summer in February," which was featured in the January 2, 2013, issue of *Country Life*, is scheduled to be released in Britain

continued on page 5



SAVE THE DATE

*Benefit Polo Match
and Luncheon*

September 15, 2013

VIPolo grounds

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Jesse Freidin Photographs



Matt and Charlie, Pheasant Hunt, Black Point, © Jesse Freidin, Photographer

The California and New York-based fine art photographer Jesse Freidin began the series of fifteen photographs in *American Sporting Heritage: A Portrait Survey of Contemporary Hunters and their Gun Dogs* by asking the question, "Why do people still hunt today?" He took a Socratic approach to the photographs, allowing himself to be guided by an internal dialogue about what he knew and what he believed to be true about hunters and their interactions with their surrounding environment.

Freidin's questions started with his thoughts on the principles of sustainable agriculture in a time when game meat can be purchased from a store. "Humans evolved alongside dogs," he thought. "Learning to hunt became ingrained as humans," but he posited, "Do we need to continue hunting for our food?"

Known for his dog portraits, Freidin easily identified with the relationships that humans and canines form. Although he does not hunt, he gained a respect for shooting early on. "I learned the weight and responsibility of using a firearm," he said of completing the NRA marksmanship Qualification Program, becoming a marksman, and competing. Nevertheless, he took an unflinching approach to the series. "Something is being killed. Why is this beautiful?" he questioned.

Freidin applied the same techniques he uses for his dog portraiture by conducting in-depth interviews of his human subjects while watching them interact with their dogs. Through observation and taking in the sitters' narratives, Freidin began to appreciate the contemplative aspects of the pastime, the keeping of the tradition and the intrinsic harmony between hunters and nature. "They are being human, meditative and at ease," he said. "For them the practice is not good or bad. It just is."

Freidin also experienced dilemmas of the contemporary hunter trying to "escape" and commune with nature in areas that are becoming increasingly developed. The photographer sometimes found himself hard-pressed to compose images devoid of the marks of civilization such as powerlines, roads or overhead planes from an airport near a marsh.

Shooting with medium-format cameras, Freidin still works with film using traditional techniques in an age when digital photography and computer post-processing have overtaken the photographic medium. He develops his rich and tonally balanced prints himself in an exacting and precise artistic process.

The resulting series of hunting portraits is intimate,

vibrant and fresh, yet has a modern appeal. In essence, Freidin is preserving two traditions – the art of analog photography and the generations-old experience of hunting. Through his camera lens, Freidin invites the viewer to join him in contemplating the question, "Why do people still hunt today?" and explore the relationship between the contemporary hunter, his gun dog and the modern landscape. The exhibition is on view until September 29, 2013.



Yukon's First Retrieve,
© Jesse Freidin, Photographer

—George L. Ohrstrom, Jr. Curator Claudia Pfeiffer

Library News Update

- The NSLM was the successful bidder of a book of 13 hand-colored lithographs, *École impériale de cavalerie, Saumur: Chez Javaud, [1869]*, at a Christie's auction in Paris, April 29, 2013. The B. H. Breslauer Foundation, of New York, generously awarded a grant for the full cost for its acquisition. This important book beautifully depicts late 19th-century French cavalry training, which had an influence in the development of 20th century equestrianism. More details will follow in the next newsletter!
- Over 200 visitors attended the NSLM Book Fair held Saturday, May 25, in conjunction with the Hunt County Stable Tour. Authors Rita Mae Brown, Dorothy Ours and Jan Neuharth signed books. Book conservationist Jill Deiss of Cat Tail Run Book Bindery gave a presentation on the restoration of a set of Thomas Jefferson's books. The Library's used book sale earned over \$1,200 and the proceeds benefit the Library's Book Acquisition Fund.
- One of last year's Book Fair authors, Patrick Smithwick, has been awarded the seventh annual Dr. Tony Ryan Book Award, for his 2012 autobiographical work *Flying Change: A Year of Racing and Family and Steeplechasing*, the subject of his presentation.
- The fall Duplicate Book Sale catalog will be issued this September, for the first time, as a catalog of books for sale instead of a "silent" auction as in years past. Books will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis via email or telephone order. The catalogs will be mailed to NSLM members first. This will be later followed by an email blast with a link to the catalog to all other friends of the NSLM.
- Stay tuned to two book signings in the works for this summer. NSLM member Paul Cronin is helping us plan a book signing for a new book by three-day eventing champion Phillip Dutton; and Middleburg mayor Betsy Davis is helping us plan a book launch for her father, photographer Howard Allen, with a collection of his best photos of Jacqueline Kennedy when she stayed in the local Middleburg area to foxhunt and ride with her children.

—Librarian Lisa Campbell

Aside or Astride: Anglo-American Women Equestrians Writers

by Dr. Jean Williams

Surprisingly very little research exists on female contributions to equestrian sport. The key objective of my three week John H. Daniels Fellowship has been to trace a history of women's participation in equestrianism in America, Britain and Ireland in the 19th and 20th Centuries. The discursive slippage between defining a female amateur and a professional has been one of the challenges of the research. Even women who have enjoyed considerable leisure have made major contributions to equine breeding, carriage driving and hunting cultures as well as working as artists, writers and advisors on dress. The NSLM collections are of international significance in a very relaxed and welcoming atmosphere to work. Not least, the Library catalogue pushed back my timescale for the project to Dame Juliana Berners' *The Treatyse of Fysshynge Wyth An Angle* in 1496. Berners also wrote on Hunting, Hawking and Fowling, though little biographical detail on her life has been found. Though the authorship of the texts remains controversial, the NSLM collection enables the researcher to follow through several re-editions of this seminal work for the historian of sport. Whatever the attribution, Berners' writing is a good indicator that women have ridden, raced, hunted and fought with horses since well before the formation of the Jockey Club in England in the 1750s. Just as male royalty and aristocracy patronised horse racing, by 1797 Ladies' Plates had been established at Guildford, Lewes, York and Egham races and a Ladies' Purse at Chester. The rare book room at the NSLM has been invaluable for access to collections such as the Somerville and Ross compendia by the celebrated Anglo-Irish cousins who travelled far and wide in their equine adventures; works by Mrs. Stuart Menzies, Belle Beach and other doyens.

The archival material held illustrates a variety of female careers as expert trainers; horse and hound breeding aficionados; coach drivers; social commentators and Olympic horsewomen. The written legacy left by the papers of diverse individuals



Daniels Fellow Dr. Jean Williams

enables a wider non-riding public to understand the nuances of distinction, taste and breeding (of both horses and people). The scrapbooks of women like Lida Fleitmann Bloodgood; Elizabeth Daingerfield; Lucy Linn and Dorothy Neyhart have been invaluable in this regard and are not available elsewhere. The famous quotation about Ginger Rogers' partnership with dancer Fred Astaire was that she did everything he did, except backwards and in high heels. We might say that our female hunters and MFH often rode the same challenging course as their male colleagues but often in elegant costume and mounted side saddle on their horse.

Female equestrianism is an historically important, but underacknowledged, sporting phenomenon therefore, and particularly after 1945. Not least, the International Olympic Committee (IOC, founded in 1896) and Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI, founded in 1921) gradually admitted women to the three disciplines at the Games, beginning with dressage in 1952, show-jumping in 1956 and three-day eventing (combining dressage, jumping and cross-country) in 1964. While equestrianism was to have an important place in Olympic competition, Pat Smythe and others were to popularise it internationally after 1948, as much to readers as to riders. Even so, equestrianism draws attention to the wider disparity in the gendered nature of access to resources in sport. The 1950s and early 1960s were important times for a swift change in the image of horse ownership and now a large percentage of those involved are women.

My research so far has focussed generally on the British Library collections, London and those at the Fashion

and Technology Institute, New York. The Fashion and Technology Institute collections in New York helped me to understand American women's riding attire as a complex amalgam of social distinction, practical costume, personal nuance and taste. Examples of clothing from the mid 19th to the mid 20th century showed evidence of sophisticated solutions to the pragmatic needs of riding (both side saddle and astride). This is part of a bigger project on the changing representation of equestrianism in America, Britain and Ireland to become a more female-inclusive, and led, phenomenon. Social class was important: American Dorothy Neyhart was a socialite as well as an accomplished horsewoman and a very young Master of the Hunt. Her fashionable gowns and appearance at social events were as significant as her sporting dress. This enabled wider social commentary. Britain's Pat Smythe was also one of several postwar British sports personalities to have a prolific career as a writer and columnist on a number of subjects from horse care and management, to ski-ing, conservation and adventure stories for children. The pony-mad teenager became an international phenomena. Subsequently, more people from a wider range of backgrounds began to take part in more equestrian events. Disability sport has a small but important part of this wider story, too. The scrapbooks have enabled me to understand both how diverse female equestrians recorded their own career as a kind of personal memoir, while the published material provides comparison with how that life could be mediated to a wider public. The National Sporting Library & Museum has therefore provided a unique and extensive collection of visual, written and personal items and I am grateful, both for the support provided by the fellowship and for the generous help of the staff who have helped me to mine the collections.

Dr. Jean Williams is Senior Research Fellow in the International Centre for Sports History and Culture, De Montfort University Leicester UK.

The Visitors section usually seen on this page has been moved to the NSLM Facebook account at www.nsl.org



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Robin Parsky Hosts “The Gift of Literature” with George Morris

Mrs. Robin Parsky, a Chairman's Council member, hosted “The Gift of Literature” with George Morris, an event at her home in Wellington, Florida, March 29, 2013. The event was co-hosted by Jacqueline B. Mars, and was attended by several top current and past horse show and event riders, owners and trainers. Manuel H. Johnson, NSLM chairman of the board, gave opening remarks, and board member Dr. Betsee Parker gave a brief talk about her experiences riding in Morris's clinics in years past.

George Morris, author of the classic *Hunter Seat Equitation* (1971), equestrian columnist, clinician and coach, has made a bequest of his annotated horsemanship book collection to the Library. To honor his pending gift, Mrs. Parsky organized the reception on behalf of the NSLM. At the evening reception, Morris read from four books by his favorite authors and shared insights into his development as a horseman. Over the years, Morris said that he often goes back to reread passages from the literature of James Fillis, Horace Hayes, Harry D. Chamberlain and Gordon Wright, to reinforce concepts of riding, training and teaching.



New Assistant Librarian Sara Pierce

The NSLM welcomes Sara Pierce who joins the staff as assistant librarian. A recent transplant from Florida, she graduated from Florida State University with a Master of Science in Library and Information Studies in 2012. Prior to the NSLM, Sara worked at the Claude Pepper Library and Museum at FSU and volunteered in Special Collections at FSU and Rollins College. Additionally, she has several years of experience in the non-profit sector specializing in database management. She has a lifelong love of horses, which began with books by Marguerite Henry, and is excited to be working at the NSLM. She holds a Bachelor's degree in English Literature from Memorial University of Newfoundland in Canada and is happy to be back living where it snows!



Sara Pierce



James Wofford Book Signing

On May 16, 2013, James Wofford spoke to a capacity crowd at the NSLM and signed copies of *Modern Gymnastics: Systematic Training for Jumping Horses*. A renowned coach, Wofford has had at least one student on every U.S. Olympic, World Championship or Pan Am teams since 1978. He was introduced by former student Olympian Karen O'Connor who is pictured here with Wofford.

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Munnings

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on June 15, 2013, with an exclusive screening at the Royal Academy of Arts. Starring Dominic Cooper, Dan Stevens and Emily Browning, the visually rich film is based on the diaries of Gilbert Evans, one of the people in the Lamorna artist enclave. Jonathan Smith used the diaries to develop the book, *Summer in February*, which became the basis for the film of the same name.

Guests strolled to a large tent on the NSLM grounds for dinner and



the much anticipated first American screening of the film. A Cornish-themed dinner was followed by truffle oil popcorn and Mars chocolates. Chairman Manuel H. Johnson welcomed guests and thanked the principal organizers of the evening: Mrs. Robert H. Smith, Chairman; the Ladies Committee; and Mrs. Jacqueline B. Mars who was instrumental in bringing the film to the NSLM for a private screening. Johnson also acknowledged the many sponsors of the evening whose support helped to make the *Munnings: Out in the Open* exhibition and the evening's celebration possible. A major gift of a flying package was given by NetJets®. Enthusiasm took hold when a spontaneous auction occurred during the award of the NetJets® prize, raising more funds for the NSLM. A complete list of sponsors can be found at www.nslm.org and photos may be viewed on the Facebook page.

Plans for the film distribution in the United States have not been released but the schedule will be posted by the NSLM as soon as it is available.

2013 - 2014 Exhibitions and Events

April 24 – September 15, 2013,
Munnings: Out in the Open,
Museum

April 24 – August 30, 2013, *Sir
Alfred J. Munnings in Print:
Unpublished Letters and Drawings
from the NSLM Collection*, Library

June 5 – September 29, 2013,
*Contemporary Hunters and their
Gun Dogs: Photography Series* by
Jesse Freidin, Museum

June 6 – September 7, 2013,
Saturdays, 2:00 p.m., Curator's
Talk, Museum

June 30, July 28, August 25, 2013,
2:00 – 4:00 p.m., Sunday Sketch,
Museum

September 1, 2013 – January 30,
2014, *Teaming with Nature: James
Prosek*, Library

September 5, 2013, 5:30 – 7:30
p.m., Reception and Open
House, Gallery Talk by Jesse
Freidin

September 15, 2013, NSLM Polo
Cup Fundraising Event, VIPolo
grounds

September 28, 2013 – March 1,
2014, *Angling in the Western
World*, Museum

October 12 – February 25, 2014,
*Contemporary Artist-Naturalists:
Robin Hill and Meg Page*,
Museum

October 18, 2013, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.,
Reception and Open House,
Lecture by Robin Hill

November 7, 2013, Treasures
from the Rare Book Room
Lecture by Michael Suarez, Ivy
Circle and Chairman's Council

November 16, 2013, 9:00 a.m. –
5:30 p.m., "Perspectives on
Teaming with Nature," an
NSLM Symposium, Library and
Museum

Creating “Hunt Country”: the Material Evolution of Foxhunting around Middleburg, 1880-1940

by Hannah Clark

Having previously visited Middleburg and the National Sporting Library & Museum on my Gap Year six years ago, it was with great pleasure that I returned as a Daniels Fellow in 2012. My research evolved from a previous thesis completed at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. “Masculinity, Modernity and the Meltonian: The Material World of Fashionable Foxhunting in Leicestershire, 1750-1840” considered the growth of the famous Quorn, Cottesmore and Belvoir hunts and their impact upon the architectural and commercial growth of Melton Mowbray, and the surrounding countryside. It also considered how the evolution of sport tourism and networks of movement and exchange between the fashionable masculine centres of London (such as the Dandy culture of St James, Piccadilly) and Leicestershire, created a modern foxhunting culture whose etiquette and structure form the basis of hunting tradition today.

In turning to the other side of the story across the Atlantic, I hoped to explore how hunting traditions created in Leicestershire might have been adopted and adapted in Virginia – “The Leicestershire of America,” during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Certainly many ideas of correct field etiquette, hunting attire and hunting structures followed English precedents. Piedmont Hunt accounts and private hunting diaries from the beginning of the twentieth century reveal regular orders from top London sporting tailors and suppliers. Indeed, American demand for British sporting goods, art and literature appears to have been high. Contemporaneous American publications were full of adverts for British hunting retailers advertising for the American market, or American suppliers offering



Daniels Fellow Hannah Clark

imported British goods. British businesses such as Swayne, Adney, Brigg and Ackermann’s even opened stand-alone stores in the U.S., supplying the keen American sportsman with correct clothing and antique Alken prints. Similarly, American sporting libraries and homes were filled with imported English texts such as Surtees and Nimrod and antique oil paintings of foxhunting scurries in the Shires.

However, in other ways, foxhunting in Virginia reveals a far more interesting and complicated story - a story that is surprisingly modern and should be contextualised within the American Colonial Revival and the greater desire for an American identity in the face of industrialisation and immigration. Primary sources and material culture reveal that modern organised foxhunting (which was established in Leicestershire by the 1790s) had very little impact in Virginia until the end of the nineteenth century. Yet during the twentieth century, American newspapers and writers carefully constructed a foxhunting narrative that suggested an illustrious, nationalistic past.

Whilst, foxhunting certainly had an ancient pedigree in Virginia, until the end of the nineteenth century it still consisted of individual private packs and pre-Meynellian methods of hunting. Nor did fox-

hunting appear to have been ranked very highly amongst popular American field sports. *The Cabinet of Natural History of American Rural Sports, 1830-1833* and *The Sportsman’s Portfolio of American Field Sports, 1855* do not even mention foxhunting. Similarly, until the 1890s Turf, Field and Farm deemed cricket to be more worthy of its reader’s attention!

Yet, by the 1920s foxhunting in Virginia was not only immensely fashionable but was seen as a continuation of many centuries of tradition. The sporting press, society papers and individuals such as the redoubtable Harry Worcester Smith, created a heroic narrative that suggested modern Virginian foxhunting emanated from the father of the nation himself, George Washington. Furthermore, New York and Washington newspapers and publications such as *The Sportsman* promoted a brand of fashionable Virginian foxhunting that was distinctly and proudly American. The success of this can be seen in contemporaneous advertising, the commercial evolution of Middleburg and the proliferation of surrounding hunt boxes and estates. Images of a traditional Virginian foxhunt were used to advertise everything from drinks, clothing and camera film, to private aeroplanes that would whisk the New York “city slicker” to a meet in Middleburg.

The material culture within the Library has revealed a surprisingly rich area for exploration, and as I write up my research I hope to continue to contextualise the Virginian story of foxhunting within the greater story of shifting American identity, cultural exchange, sports tourism and heritage.

Fellow Hannah Clark graduated with an MA in History of Design and Material Culture from the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, in July 2012 and is working on several articles considering the impact of foxhunting on design.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

The NSLM would like to extend its sincere thanks for the following recent donations to the permanent collection.

John Bryan (American)
Meeting at the Museum, 2013
 Wood panel relief, 53 x 53 inches
 Gift of David and Barbara Roux



Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait
 (American, 1819 – 1905)
Jealousy, 1886
 Oil on canvas, 20 1/4 x 30 inches
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Susan Waters (American, 1823 - 1900)
Chickens and Raspberries, c.1880
 Oil on canvas, 24 x 16 inches
 Gift of the Phelan Collection



after **Edward "Ned" King**
 (American, 1886 – 1962)
Steeplechasing; a set of four,
 c. 1926
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 heightened with chalk
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 1/2 inches
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 (English/ American, ? - 1993)
The Quail Hunter, 1986
 Acrylic on board, 17 1/2 x 23
 1/4 inches
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Jean Eleanor Bowman
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*Portrait of Comtesse de
 Loire*, 1975
 Watercolor on paper
 sight size 8 1/2 x 10 1/2
 inches
 Gift of Molly Morgan

Rick Roenisch (Canadian)
*A Polo Player: Polo Hall of Fame
 Award*,
John Elliott Cowdin,
Elected February 16, 2007
 13 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches (excluding
 base)
 bronze; dark brown patina on a
 wooden base
 Gift of Molly Morgan



Featured Volunteer

After working as an NSLM Museum intern in the fall of 2012, Lauren Kraut has continued to volunteer her time on the weekends. Lauren is a graduate of the University of Edinburgh and George Mason University and was as an intern at the National Library of Scotland and the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. She has been a great help to the NSLM working at the front desk on Saturdays and assisting with research and edits for the *Munnings: Out in the Open* exhibition and catalog.



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The National Sporting Library & Museum wishes to recognize and thank the following Ivy Circle members whose donations are \$5,000 and above, and the Chairman's Council members whose donations are \$2,500 and above. These contributions form the foundation of financial support for the NSLM's operations. We are grateful for gifts at all levels, and we thank our many donors and friends.

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Mr. John P. White
Mrs. Margaret R. White

LIBRARY HOURS: Tuesday - Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Saturday: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Closed Sunday and Monday.
MUSEUM HOURS: Wednesday - Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Sunday noon - 4:00 p.m. Closed Monday and Tuesday.



**NATIONAL SPORTING
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